

REFORMA DE FLORIDA

Noticias del mes/News of the month

Notes from the Editor

September is upon us. If we lived up north, we'd be enjoying the beginnings of cool breezes as leaves prepare to put on colorful Fall colors of red, yellow, orange, and more for our enjoyment.

However, here in Florida, we'll have a continuation of the season's hot, humid, rainy weather. Some leaves turn brown and trickle down to remind us this is how we celebrate Fall in the warm south.

President Lucia M. Gonzalez opens by sharing warm words of wisdom for our members, inviting you to our monthly virtual Board meetings.

If you're not yet a member, or are a member of only REFORMA National, follow Lucia's directions to become a member of the chapter.

I hope to see you at the upcoming REFORMA National Conference VIII in Long Beach California, taking place September 18-21. It will be my first, so I'm excited!!

Alma Ramos-McDermott,
Editor

President's column

by Lucia M. Gonzalez



Greetings REFORMA de Florida Members! As President of REFORMA de Florida for the 2025-2026 term, I want to thank the Board of Directors for their hard work and dedication to our organization and its mission. I am excited to collaborate with the Board, as well as with all Chapter Members and future members, as we navigate complex and challenging times facing libraries, librarianship and, especially, library services to the communities we serve and represent.

September is a significant month, as many Latin American countries celebrate their independence from Spain. Happy Independence Day / Feliz día de la independencia Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, and Nicaragua!

Interestingly, the official designation for this period (September 15-October 12) is "*Hispanic Heritage Month*," despite the focus being on liberation from Spanish rule. This month commemorates the triumph of "*la nueva raza*."

Let this September mark the beginning of a powerful and impactful year for REFORMA de Florida! We will concentrate on increasing our membership base and strengthening REFORMA de Florida's role as the central hub for information and resources on library services for Latinos and Spanish speakers in Florida. We will work closely with REFORMA National to align our Chapter's goals and objectives with those outlined in the new Strategic Plan.

As you read this month's newsletter, I encourage you to share it with your co-workers and staff. It is great to be part

President's column (continued)

of this REFORMA familia and share information about each other's programs, services, challenges, and accomplishments. If you are interested in learning more about the Chapter, I'd like to invite you to attend our virtual monthly Board Meetings.

To become a member of REFORMA visit [REFORMA.org](https://reformade.org), become a member, and select "FLORIDA Chapter" as your home chapter.

I look forward to seeing some of you at the National REFORMA Conference VIII in Long Beach, CA this September 18-21, or at the Miami Book Fair International where REFORMA de Florida will join the activities. Visit us at <https://reformadeflorida.org>

You are invited!

Every month, the Executive Board of REFORMA de Florida holds an online meeting to discuss the business of the chapter, work on ways to encourage chapter growth, and fine-tune our community involvement. President Lucia Gonzalez started her presidency by inviting all members to join in the summer Board meeting held this past July.

The next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday September 9th at 7 pm EST. A link will be sent to members soon, so be sure to check your email. Get to know your Board members, find out what's going on with the chapter, how you can help, and add your voice.

Dear Future Librarian

by Gaby Gomez



Meet Jennifer Izquierdo, a proud Hialeah native, first-generation American, and double master's student who proves that chasing your passions is never "too much," it's exactly enough. With one foot in History at the University of Florida and the other in the MLIS program at the University of South Florida, Jennifer is blending her love for archives, rare books, and community to build a career that's both rooted in heritage and focused on the future of librarianship.

Could you share a bit about your background and what inspired you to pursue your MLIS at the University of South Florida?

My name is Jennifer Izquierdo, and I grew up in Hialeah, FL. Growing up first-generation American to Cuban immigrants, education has played a big role in my life. I've always had a passion for books and history. After volunteering at my local public library, I knew that I would enjoy a career in archives and librarianship. I did my undergrad at the University of Florida for History, and I am now doing two masters (one at UF for History and a MLIS at USF).



Dear Future Librarian (continued)

What's something you've learned in your MLIS program that completely shifted your perspective on librarianship?

How community oriented it is. Librarians are more than just custodians of books. They are expected to be social workers, educators, and community organizers. Learning how community oriented it is has solidified my passion and interest in librarianship.

What has been your favorite class or assignment so far, and why?

I've always been drawn to rare books and was pleased to hear that USF offered a course on rare books. I enjoyed all the assignments and liked how the course was tailored to each aspect of rare books collections (management, preservation, ethics, etc.)

What role do you think student organizations like SOLIS play in shaping future librarians?

I think student organizations like SOLIS will be at the forefront of nationwide discussions of the future of librarianship, or at least I hope so. Organizations like SOLIS and University ALA chapters have the power to advocate for the community and educate on the importance of our libraries.

What kind of librarian do you hope to become, and what environments are you most drawn to (public, academic, archives, etc.)?

I am drawn to both academic and archival librarianship, but I am leaning more towards archives. I hope to be the kind of librarian that inspires and educates.

What advice would you give to students just beginning their MLIS journey, especially those unsure about getting involved?

Get involved with your local and university libraries if possible. This will help guide you to explore different aspects of librarianship to see which you like best. University librarians are always on the lookout for student assistants and volunteers to help with projects. The great thing about an MLIS is that it's more flexible than people think. If librarianship turns out to be something you don't enjoy as a career, other career paths are available such as data science, legal assistants, and information specialists. An MLIS provides a variety of skillsets that transfer well in other professions.

Favorite library you've ever visited?

A bit biased, but probably my undergraduate's university Smathers Library. It's the oldest library on campus and houses the Latin American Special Collections. We have a Grand Reading Room that is open to researchers that looks very old and academic. Studying in that atmosphere makes me feel like I'm about to unearth some life-changing history.

Your go-to library or life motto in one sentence?

"If something burns your soul with purpose and desire, it's your duty to be reduced to ashes by it. Any other form of existence will be yet another dull book in the library of life." – Charles Bukowski

Jennifer reminds us that being a future librarian isn't just about loving books; it's about carrying forward culture, history, and community with passion (and maybe a little bit of fire in the soul, as her favorite quote says!) Whether she's studying rare books, advocating through student

Dear Future Librarian (continued)

organizations, or dreaming up her future in archives, Jennifer is proof that libraries thrive when we bring our whole selves, heritage, curiosity, and all into the stacks.

P.S. I'm always looking for MLIS students to feature in upcoming columns! If you'd like to share your story, [email me](#). Let's show the world how wonderfully chaotic and diverse our paths into librarianship can be.

With a hot decaf breve latte and solidarity,
Gaby

!Latineando!

by David Hernandez Rivero



Saludos y felicitaciones a los reformistas de South Florida.

September is partially National Hispanic Heritage Month, since the celebration is officially from Sept. 15th to Oct. 15th. Libraries all over the U.S. celebrate a community's accomplishments, resilience, and cultural icons. We celebrate personalities such as writers and artists. We also celebrate stories of survival and success that have shaped our Latino community. Numerous Latinos have made significant

contributions in diverse areas such as science, education, sports, entertainment, and others.

I always wonder why we celebrate from September 15th to October 15th and not an entire month like September or October. One possible explanation is the fact that on September 15th a few countries in Centro America celebrate Independence Day: Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Mexico celebrates their independence on September 16th, a date that commemorates *El Grito de Dolores*. On this date the priest Miguel Hidalgo gave a speech calling for independence from Spain. Chile also celebrates their independence on September 18th.

Book displays are an integral part of this celebration. I'd like to give you some ideas I have implemented in previous NHHMs. Always keep in mind that ideas might work for your library and community depending on several factors such as library size, specific demographics, and other sociocultural factors.

I love to show displays that showcase Latino authors across several genres such as fiction, non-fiction, children's literature, etc. Some personal recommendations are authors of the Boom (classics such as Garcia Marquez, Vargas Llosa, etc.), New Latin-American voices, or distinguished Latino writers in the U.S. Other recommendations are based on the rich and diverse Latino culture such as exploring the role of food in Latin American where staple crops have shaped societies' cultural and religious ideas since precolonial times. Corn, beans, squash, and yams have been included in creation myths and folk stories all over the Americas. Modern delicacies such as *tamales*, *arroz con leche*, *flan*, and others are found across the continent. We might have books in our collections that celebrate Latino's diverse culinary traditions.

Latineando (continued)

Biographies of numerous Latino personalities is another display I love to include. Some possible suggestions are biographies of Selena Gomez, Sonia Sotomayor, Celia Cruz, Roberto Clemente, and others. Since numerous Independence Days are celebrated in September we might explore the varied histories, cultures, and landscapes that shaped those countries. Mexico, for example, is a country with a rich history that spans thousands of years. Great civilizations that erected magnificent temples and pyramids are part of Mexico's rich history. We may explore books and posters that show Mexico's diverse cultural aspects such as culinary or ranchera music, for instance. Across Mexico we find a rich diversity in textiles and traditional clothing as well. We might also include books by some of their most

celebrated authors such as Juan Rulfo and Carlos Fuentes, or illustrated books by Jose Guadalupe Posada, a Mexican political printmaker who used relief printing to produce popular illustrations.

I'd like to finish my column naming three great Latin-American writers, three places, and three books. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Colombian writer and Nobel prize winner in 1982, takes us to the Macondo of *100 Años de Soledad*, where magical realism shows us Latin America's numerous faces, identities, and histories. Palermo, an old *barrio* in Buenos Aires from the short stories of Jorge Luis Borges, becomes the center of numerous surreal stories in his *Ficciones* masterpiece. Legendary criminals are being chased by unusual detectives who possess vast scientific knowledge and propose surprising solutions when facing curious enigmas. Alejo Carpentier's Havana, or *la ciudad de las columnas* (the city of architectural columns) is depicted in his book *El Siglo de las Luces*. Carpentier's magical realism describes Havana as a multicultural city in which architecture and social transformation synchronize. History proves Havana is a place where transformations and reversal of fortune happened throughout its history, impacting its architectural image. The power of literature to tell great stories shapes communities and stimulates imagination. Joseph Campbell once said "*Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.*"

Enjoy the first half of our National Hispanic Celebration and explore our rich culture.

Ache to all of you.



National REFORMA Conference VIII: **September 18-21**

NRC VIII will be held in beautiful Long Beach California. This year's theme is "*Moving forward together: Empowering the Latino community.*"

If you're a member and are attending, introduce yourself to one of your board members. We'd love to meet you!

***In the Know:
We want to hear from YOU!***

What's going on in your Florida library? Readers want to learn about it, to stay "*in the know*."

If you want to contribute to future columns of "*In the Know*," informing members across the state about something going on in your library, send us an email and we'll make sure your event is featured in our next newsletter. Are YOU in the know?

Are you a Corporate member of REFORMA de Florida?

Corporate members are an important part of our chapter. Send a photo, business card, or a short blurb about your company for a future newsletter. We want to know more about you!

***What's happening?:
Northern, Central, or Southern regions***

What's happening in your library or region related to our Latino community? Email your name, region, title, library name, a short summary of your news or event, and photos. Your news could help grow membership in your region, so we look forward to hearing from you.



***Were you forwarded this newsletter but are not yet a member of
REFORMA de Florida?***

To join or renew, go to REFORMA National's Membership page and be sure to check REFORMA de Florida as your chapter.

***Is your membership getting ready to expire?
Are you a Member-at-large?***

Not sure if your membership is expiring? Email to learn your status.

If you're a REFORMA National **Member-at-large** (not associated with ReDeFL or any chapter), **join the REFORMA de Florida chapter** as a full member. Just log in to your membership account, and check REFORMA de Florida as your chapter. It's as easy as that!